

Be part of the National Soil Project at Northeastern University!

You can help the National Soil Research Project at Northeastern University, Boston, where students are measuring the humic (HA) and fulvic acid (FA) contents of the nation's agricultural top soils. HA and FA are vital organic components of healthy soils. They retain water, act as pH buffers, improve soil texture/porosity and regulate many other soil functions.

We're concerned that our HAs and FAs are being destroyed over time, leading to poorer and poorer soils. Weak soils potentially can be re-built with HAs extracted from biomass and compost. To get a clear picture, HAs and FAs have to be analyzed apart from short-lived soil organic matter such as leaves and corn stover. The Northeastern University group has many years of experience in isolating and measuring HAs and FAs. Results to date on 150 samples indicate wide variation in soil HA and FA contents.

We need to double or even triple the number of samples to be analyzed. We can do that with your help! Your job will be to collect and mail a one-pound, dry soil sample to Northeastern University for analysis. Your mailing cost will be paid back if you ask.

If you would like to participate, contact g.davies@neu.edu for complete information. The Northeastern University team will publish the results and share them with you and your family on request. Your part in this great project will be something to be truly proud of!

Geoffrey Davies, Ph. D., D.Sc., FRSC
Matthews Distinguished University Professor
Department of Chemistry & Chemical Biology
Northeastern University, Boston, MA 02115-5000
Web:<www.hagroup.neu.edu>